



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

FISHING CONTEST APPLICATION (Updated September 2011)

Any event where an entry fee is charged or where people may win prizes for catching fish in Montana is considered a fishing contest. Fishing contests involving fewer than 30 people with cash prizes or merchandise worth \$500 or less do not require a permit but must comply with all fishing contest regulations. All other contests must be permitted. No contests will be permitted for holiday weekends, and no contests are allowed involving any Montana listed species of special concern or for wild trout in rivers or streams.

For more information, please review the Reference Guide.

Important Dates:

Applications **must** be submitted between May 1 & July 1 for winter ice-fishing contests (12/1 – 3/1).

Applications **must** be submitted between September 1 & November 1 for open-water contests (3/1 – 12/1).

****Late Applications WILL NOT be accepted****

Application Requirements:

- ☐ Mail application to:
Fish, Wildlife and Parks
Attn: Fisheries Bureau
1420 East 6th Avenue
Helena, Montana 59620-0701
Or email application to: fwpfsh@mt.gov
- ☐ Copy of the draft contest rules.
- ☐ Copy of the Contest registration form.
- ☐ Copy of the boat-cleaning/gear cleaning requirements.
- ☐ Contest using FWP Fishing Access site or State Park
- ☐ Non FWP Fishing Access Site Authorization: All applicants are **required** to obtain the necessary permits authorizing the use of any non-FWP fishing access sites.
 - Bureau of Reclamation – 406-247-7300
 - Other Federal or State agencies
 - Private landowners
- ☐ All portions of application have been completed.

Part I. Contact Information

Name of Contest: _____

Contest Sponsor: _____

Address of Sponsor: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Contact Person: _____

Contact Persons DOB or ALS #: _____

Contact Person Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

Part II. Derby Information

1. Body of water and specific section of water body where contest will be held:

2. Dates and hours contest will be held (including starting and check-in times):

	Date	Start Time	Stop Time
1 st choice			
2 nd choice			

3. Species of fish to be included in the contest: _____

4. Designated boundaries for the contest, if any: _____

5. Fishing Access Site: _____

6. Location of starting and check-in points:

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7. Location and time of rules meeting:

8. Location and time of weigh-in:

9. Entry fee to be charged: _____

10. Estimated number of participants: _____

11. Requirements for participation:

12. Description and value of prizes (including amounts of cash prizes):

PART III. Other

1. Describe contest format including basis for awarding prizes (longest or heaviest individual or combination of fish, etc.; be specific):

2. What measures are proposed to avoid or reduce conflict with other users:

3. Other comments or information:

If no FWP sites are involved, please sign below. If an FWP site is involved, please continue to Part IV.

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

I am authorized to serve as a representative for this event. I certify that the information given by me in this application is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge. I agree to comply with the terms and conditions listed on the permit. I understand that failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the event or failure to submit records within 30 days of the conclusion of the event may result in loss of future opportunities to obtain a permit.

Applicant Signature

Date _____

PART IV. SPECIAL USE PERMIT FEES

This page **MUST** be completed for contest involving FWP fishing access sites or state parks.

FWP assesses a special use permit fee of \$3 per participant for all fishing contests with 30 or more people using FWP administered fishing access sites or state parks. The fee is used to off-set the cost of administering the event, including but not limited to site clean-up, latrine pumping, road plowing and maintenance/monitoring. FWP may adjust this fee on a case-by-case basis. Examples that may warrant a fee reduction include: contests organized primarily for children under the age of 13; contests conducted by nonprofit organizations; and contests when proceeds are donated to a nonprofit organization, a charitable cause, educational programs, or the maintenance, management, or improvement of FWP sites. Fee adjustment decisions are the responsibility of FWP and are based on the information provided in this permit application. Please complete the remainder of this page to help FWP determine the fee amount. The contest organizer is responsible for submitting all owed fees within 30 days after the conclusion of the contest. Organizers will receive a Fee Payment Form with their permit.

1. Names of FWP fishing access sites or state parks that would be utilized or affected by contest:

Name of site: _____

Name of site: _____

Name of site: _____

Name of site: _____

Name of site: _____

Name of site: _____

2. Estimated number of people that will participate in the contest: _____

3. Check those that apply:

☐ Contest organized by a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization. Include copy of IRS tax-exempt status with your application.

☐ Proceeds from this event will be donated to FWP for maintenance, management, and/or improvement of access sites or facilities.

Name of sites/facilities: _____

Percentage of proceeds that will be donated (check one):

☐ 100% ☐ 75% ☐ 50% ☐ 25% ☐ Other: _____

☐ Proceeds from this event will be donated to a nonprofit organization or charitable cause.

Name of nonprofit organization or charitable cause: _____

Percentage of proceeds that will be donated (check one):

☐ 100% ☐ 75% ☐ 50% ☐ 25% ☐ Other: _____

☐ Contest is organized primarily for children under the age of thirteen (majority of participants are children).

SIGNATURE REQUIRED

I am authorized to serve as the representative for this event. I certify that the information given by me in this application is true, accurate, and complete to the best of my knowledge. I agree to comply with the terms and conditions listed on the permit. I understand that permit fees may apply to this event. I understand that failure to comply with the terms and conditions of the permit or failure to submit records or fees within thirty days following the conclusion of the event may result in loss of future opportunities to obtain a permit.

Applicant Signature:

Date _____

MONTANA FISHING CONTEST LAWS AND RULES

MONTANA STATUTES

87-3-121. Conditions for award of prizes. (1) It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation, association, or club to offer or give any prize, gift, or anything of value in connection with or as a bag limit prize for the taking, capturing, killing, or in any manner acquiring any game, fowl, fur-bearing animals, or any bird or animal now or that shall be hereafter protected in any way by the fish and game laws of the state of Montana.

(2) The commission shall adopt rules to regulate contests by a person, firm, corporation, association, or club that intends to offer or give a prize, gift, or anything of value in connection with or as a prize for the taking, capturing, killing, or in any manner acquiring fish that are protected under Title 87. The commission's rules must be based on the commission's duty under Title 87 to protect, preserve, and propagate fish in the state.

(3) This section shall not be construed to prohibit the award of prizes for any one game bird or fur-bearing animal on the basis of size, quality, or rarity.

History: En. Sec. 1, Ch. 82, L. 1935; re-en. Sec. 3744.1, R.C.M. 1935; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 48, L. 1974; R.C.M. 1947, 26-809; amd. Sec. 1, Ch. 346, L. 1987.

FWP Rules for Regulation of Fishing Contests

12.7.801 DEFINITION (1) "Fishing contest" is any event, contest, derby or tournament where an entry fee is charged or where people are expected to compete to win prizes or cash based on the capture of an individual fish or combination of fish. Fishing contests involving fewer than 30 people with cash prizes or merchandise worth \$500 or less do not require a permit but must comply with the provisions of this subchapter.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.802 APPLICATION (1) Any individual, club, organization or business wishing to sponsor a fishing contest on a body of water open to public fishing must submit an application to the department of fish, wildlife and parks as specified in this rule.

(2) Applications must be submitted between September 1 and November 1 for open water contests proposed for the following March 1 through December 1;

(a) applications for benefit fundraising contests received later than November 1 may be accepted.

(3) Applications must be submitted between May 1 and July 1 for ice fishing contests proposed for the following December 1 through March 1;

(a) applications for benefit fundraising contests received later than July 1 may be accepted.

(4) Contest sponsors must provide documentation that they have approval to use each fishing access site not under the ownership or control of the department that is listed in the application.

(5) Contest sponsors are responsible for notifying participants of any public safety concerns associated with the contest.

(6) Contest sponsors are responsible for notifying participants that boats and trailers must be cleaned before and after the contest to prevent transport and introduction of aquatic nuisance species.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.803 EVALUATION AND RECOMMENDATION (1) The department will evaluate the application based on the following criteria:

- a) impacts of the contest on the fish population of the host body of water, the aquatic ecosystem and the immediate area;
 - b) Compatibility of the contest with fisheries management objectives for the water;
 - (c) purse or participation limits (limits may or may not be imposed depending upon public comments received or potential conflict with other users);
 - (d) conflicts with other contests proposed for a body of water;
 - (e) compliance with contest rules, conditions or reporting requirements for previously sponsored contests;
 - (f) environmental conditions (such as relevant historic high water temperatures) and compatibility of check-in format with successful release of live fish for catch and release contests; and
 - (g) contest boundaries.
- (2) The department will give public notice of all contests and provide an opportunity for public comment on each application.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.804 COMPETING APPLICATIONS (1) When two or more contests are proposed on a single body of water the department will approve applications which:

- (a) offer the best opportunities for public benefits by furthering knowledge of angling ethics and aquatic ecology;
 - (b) have been approved historically;
 - (c) have had good participation; and
 - (d) have a good record of compliance.
- (2) The department may request that applicants competing for a permit on the same or consecutive weekends resolve conflicts and allocate limited dates among themselves.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

12.7.805 DEPARTMENT DECISION (1) The department will issue a decision regarding applications no later than February 1 for open water contests or October 1 for ice-fishing contests. The department may approve an application as submitted, approve an application with modifications or deny an application. When an application is approved with modifications, the applicant must respond to the department within 20 days of receipt of the department's written decision if the modifications are unacceptable. Failure to do so will constitute acceptance of the decision.

(2) An application may be denied if in the opinion of the department any of the following are found to exist:

- (a) the contest will have detrimental impacts on fish populations, the aquatic ecosystem or the surrounding area;
- (b) the contest would conflict with management goals for the host water;
- (c) the contest conflicts with other proposed contests or intended uses of the host water;
- (d) the proposed contest would be held during a period of heavy recreational use on the host body of water, increasing the likelihood of conflicts with other users; and
- (e) there is significant public opposition to the proposed contest based on biological or recreational

conflict concerns. Public comments will be provided to the sponsor on request.

(3) Conditions may be placed on contests to:

(a) minimize fish mortality in catch and release contests;

(b) regulate harvest;

(c) reduce user conflicts; or

(d) require supplemental trash removal, restroom facilities, or other maintenance at department access sites when routine facilities and maintenance are inadequate for the contest.

(4) Contests may not be scheduled and approved for consecutive weekends on any body of water less than 100,000 surface acres in size.

(5) Contests may not be scheduled on holiday weekends, including but not limited to Memorial Day, Fourth of July, and Labor Day.

(6) The department will notify the applicant of its decision by mail. The department shall notify the public with an announcement released to all major state newspapers and through notice published on the department website.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

[12.7.806 REPORTING REQUIREMENTS](#) (1) Within 30 days after an approved fishing contest, the sponsor shall report to the department information on the success of contest participants on forms provided at the time of contest approval.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

[12.7.807 PROHIBITED CONTESTS](#) (1) Contests involving any Montana listed species of special concern are prohibited except the following:

(a) Contests are allowed for lake/reservoir stocked Yellowstone cutthroat trout ([Oncorhynchus clarki bouvieri](#)) or westslope cutthroat trout ([Oncorhynchus clarki lewisi](#)) including upper Missouri cutthroat trout.

(2) All contests involving wild trout ([Salmo Onchorynchus](#) or [Salvelinus](#)) in streams/rivers are prohibited.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

[12.7.808 WAIVER](#) (1) Upon a showing of good cause, the department may waive the application of any rule except where waiver is precluded by statute.

(2) During approved catch-and-release fishing contest hours, fish caught for contest purposes and released alive by contest participants are not considered part of their daily limit. Contest participants may not have more than the daily limit in their possession at any time. All fish must be released alive at the end of the day unless the fish died as a result of handling during the contest.

AUTH: 87-3-121, MCA

IMP: 87-3-121, MCA

[12.7.809 APPEAL TO THE COMMISSION](#) (1) The applicant or any person supporting or opposing an application may appeal the decision of the department to the commission. An appeal may be

made on any grounds or arguments made to the department during the department's evaluation and consideration of the application. A notice of appeal must be filed with the commission within 20 days of written notice of the department's decision.

(2) The commission's decision to approve the application as submitted, to approve the application with modifications or to deny the application will be made on the criteria of ARM [12.7.805](#). The commission's decision will be final. (History Sec. 87-2-121 MCA; IMP, Sec. 87-3-121 MCA; New, 1995 MAR p. 367, Eff. 3/17/95.)



Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks

AQUATIC INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

BOAT WASHING REQUIREMENTS

Aquatic invasive species are a threat to our aquatic resources. Zebra mussels, Eurasian watermilfoil, New Zealand mudsnails, and whirling disease are just a few of the destructive and aggressive invaders that threaten Montana waterways. Aquatic invasive species have few natural predators or control agents, they can reproduce and grow rapidly and threaten the ecological stability, diversity and abundance of native species. Aquatic invasive species also threaten commercial, agricultural, aquaculture, and recreational activities. Boats, trailers, and equipment that come in contact with aquatic systems easily transport these exotics. Aquatic invasive species can be introduced into new areas by the movement of water; they can also be transported to new sites attached to boats, trailers, and equipment. Many of the invasive species that threaten Montana have the ability to withstand extended periods of time out of water or in small amounts of water making their transport to new locations possible.

All participants in Montana fishing tournaments will be asked to cooperate with Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks in the tournament requirements that all boats be washed prior to launching. **It is up to the individual participants to clean, drain, and dry their watercraft prior to participating in the tournament.** Ensuring that all boats are clean of any plants or animals prior to being launched will help to prevent the spread of aquatic invasive species. At some tournaments, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks personnel will carry out boat inspections. The inspection will involve checking outside surfaces of the boat for the presence of any aquatic weeds or animals and will involve inspecting the live well and interior of the boat for the presence of any unlawful live bait, other aquatic animals, or standing water. All water should be drained from boat away from waterbodies. If necessary, the exterior of the boat will be washed with a power sprayer to remove any aquatic plant parts or animals, and any unlawful live bait or other aquatics will be confiscated. The boat inspection stations will be set up at least 2 days prior to the start of the tournament to provide anglers with the opportunity to go through the inspection process prior to the day of the tournament.

Thank you for your cooperation with this program. Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks personnel were present at several of the tournaments last year and overall the boat inspection process ran very smoothly. A lot of the success of the program can be attributed to the cooperation of both the tournament organizers and participants. Thank you again for your cooperation and we look forward to working with you during the tournament season.

Please contact FWP for further information 406-444-2449.